an attempt to liberate the Russian people, but a purely strategic move, subordinated to the plans for the French-German front. In preparation for the Second Front, the Allied High Command ordered the Czech corps to stop its eastward movement and redeploy along the Volga.

In September, a conference of members of the Constituent Assembly, the Samara government, the Siberian government (Omsk), Cossack regional governments, and various political organizations met in Ufa to lay the foundation of an All-Russian government. Politically, the members of the conference ranged from the S-R to stout reactionary Cossack atamans. It was not easy for such a motley gathering to reach agreement, but finally a solution was found. Executive power would be held by a Directorate of five members responsible to the Constituent Assembly, purged of the Communists and their sympathizers. The Assembly was to convene on January 1, 1919.[8]

The Directorate included two S-R, two Cadets, and General Boldyrev, serving as a military man without party affiliation. This group seemed to have a chance to unite anti-Communist forces all over Russia. Many Russian officers stranded in Tiflis left for North Caucasus in the hope of finding their way to Siberia. But Ufa also became the rallying point for reactionary adventurers. The city was crowded with groups hostile to the Directorate. Cossack atamans brought their gangsters nearer the seat of the government. Monarchists infiltrated the military units. The anti-democratic forces around the Directorate found their leader in the person of Admiral Kolchak, former commander of the Black Sea fleet. By appointing him War Minister, the Directorate had signed its own death sentence.

On November 10, Cossack officers kidnaped the S-R members of the Directorate and left-wing members of the government. The right-wing ministers then declared the Directorate deposed and proclaimed Kolchak the Supreme Ruler of Russia. Two weeks later, members of the Constituent Assembly and ranking civilian officials of the Directorate loyal to the Assembly were arrested. A revolt of workers broke out in Omsk, and Kolchak used the occasion for a summary execution of all political prisoners in his hands. Some were shot, others run through by sabers. Several friends with whom I had shared exile in Siberia and worked in the Tauride Palace were among the victims.

The democratic forces of Ufa were no more. Now the Tsarist extremists alone opposed the Communists: the ill-fated Volunteer Army in the south, Kolchak in Siberia, Cossack war lords in the Urals and the Far East. Without the support of local populations, all these troops were bound to degenerate into armed gangsters. In the sum-

[8] A quorum of 260 members was to be necessary to validate decisions of the Assembly. If such a quorum was not at hand, the convocation of the Assembly would be postponed until February, when a quorum of 170 would suffice.